GOD SPEED THE TRUE

By M. A. MAITLAND

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GOD SPEED THE TRUE

A LITTLE VOLUME OF CHEERFUL CANADIAN VERSE

BY

M. A. MAITLAND

TORONTO
THE HUNTER-ROSE CO. LIMITED
1919

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FOREWORD

When Mary A. (Mrs. George F.) Maitland died at St. Marys, Ontario, in the winter of 1919, she had completed eighty years of life, which included nearly threescore years as a contributor to Canadian and United States periodicals. This unique record followed upon a girlhood spent in Morayshire, Scotland, where, at Elgin, she was born (Mary A. Davidson) in 1839. When she came, as a young woman, to settle with her father near Hamilton, Ontario, she had already accumulated a collection of verse in manuscript form. From that time onward, practically down to the year of her death, she was a contributor to various magazines and newspapers, writing chiefly from Hamilton, St. Catharines, Buffalo, Stratford, Dunnville and St. Marys.

The present volume represents only a small portion of her work, which includes what is probably the largest treasury of religious verse from the pen of any Canadian author. An endeavor has been made, however, to select representative poems covering the whole period of her literary activity in Canada. "Keep a Light in the Window Burning" bears date of 1861; "The Maple So Green" was published in 1870.

Many of the magazines in which the contents of this volume appeared have long since vanished. "Godey's Lady's Book" and "Truth" are memories. But others were periodicals well known to-day, notably "The Sunday School Times," and "Christian Work" in the United States, and "The Canadian Magazine" and "Canadian Baptist."

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GOD SPEED THE TRUE!

God speed the true, wherever they may be!
God speed the true
Near and afar, in huts of poverty
Where friends are few,
In lofty domes, afield and on the main,
In halls of law and lore, in mart and fane,
In lordly courts where state and splendor reign,
Where shines a crown—
God speed the true, and let the false go down!

God speed the true, whoever they may be,
God speed the true!
Guide they the flying coursers of the sea
In jackets blue,
Or but the feet that toddle by the knees;
Hold they in trust a nation's destinies
Or drive the plow; wear they wealth's robes of ease
Or garb of clown—
God speed the true, and let the false go down!

God speed the true, who art Thyself the Truth!
God speed the true
In twilight eld, noon strength, and flush of youth,
Who say and do
What need not fear the quick eyes of the light;
Whose promise is an earnest of their might
To cleave a way along the pass of right,
Come smile or frown—
God speed the true, and let the false go down!

THE GOOD OLD EARTH

Some think that the world is going astray—
A planet to ruin drifting,
Because in the lowering skies alway
They cannot perceive the rifting:
But yet the earth is a good old earth,
And faithful to frond and feather,
The flowers will spring, and the birds will sing
As long as it holds together!

Some fear that the rain will rot the roots,
Or the rust will blight the barley,
That the drought will damage the young corn shoots
If the sun won't hold a parley:
But yet the earth is a good old earth,
A true and a tender mother,
And none will fear for the blade and ear
As long as it holds together!

Some say that the world is homely grown,
And callous and cold and prosy,
And now its ways are with ashes strewn
That once were so smooth and rosy:
But young hearts find it is warm and kind,
And whisper to one another—
Love still doth reign o'er the earth's domain
And will while it holds together!

THE COMMON NEED

Ho, ye who ply the puissant pen
  To weave your thoughts in rhyme,
Whose art hath oft the souls of men,
By subtle sway beyond their ken,
  Inspired to deeds sublime.

Full well we know life's roundelay.
  The bitter and the sad,
The shafts that goad us day by day,
So, would you win our blessing, say
  Something to make us glad.

Sing down the voices of the night
  The discords we have had;
The owl and raven put to flight;
Sing out, as minstrels of the light,
  Something to make us glad.

The homely hut that we despise,
  We love when ivy-clad;
From weedy wastes that vex our eyes
The hand of cunning may devise
  Something to make us glad.

Ho, ye who ply the art divine,
  And to your fame would add,
Let brilliance flash from every line,
But with your jewelled thoughts entwine
  Something to make us glad.

SING BLITHER, HEART

Sing blither, heart, along the shortening way;
Since thou must sing,
Attune thy lyre strings to some lighter lay—
Some air of spring;
Shut out the minor of the autumn rain,
The crooning of the east wind from thy strain,
Sing blither, heart.

Sing gladder, heart, the world is full of woe,
And thou canst sing;
For such a gracious gift, what thou dost owe
Remembering,
Weave gladness in thy song, and it may bring
New strength to some bruised heart or wounded wing;
Sing gladder, heart!

Sing stronger, heart, and clearer be thy tones
Of hope and trust,
Yet higher keyed thy psalm, thy altar stones
Raised past the dust;
The shortened hand may fail, but ne'er forget—
"The Lord is in His holy temple" yet,
Sing stronger, heart.

JOY IN HEAVEN TO-DAY

Hark! from whence those hallelujahs,
  Borne upon the upper air?
'Tis the host of heaven rejoicing
  O'er a sinner bowed in prayer:
"Father, I have sinned before Thee,"
  Hear him penitently say,
And o'er one his guilt confessing
  There is joy in heaven to-day.

Hark! what means that song exultant,
  Rising heavenward from the sod?
'Tis a psalm of glad thanksgiving
  From a soul at peace with God.
Up and up the strain is wafted—
  "Jesus bore my guilt away!"
And o'er sin confessed and pardoned,
  There is joy on earth to-day!

"Glory be to God the Father,
  Who the ransom hath supplied!"
"Glory!"—heaven and earth repeat it,
  "Glory to the Crucified!"
With the song of seraphs blending,
  Is the pardoned sinner's lay;
Strains ascending and descending,
  Joy in heaven and earth to-day!

TO A WOOD THRUSH

(Singing in the Early Morn)

Sing on, glad heart, thy matin song,
Sing on, sing on!
Since silence lies on kindred tongues,
Since the wide air to thee belongs,
Since 'twas thy Maker taught thy art,
Sing on, glad heart!

Sing on before away shall pass
The grateful dew
That gracious Night shook o'er the grass
From out her robes like beads of glass:
Before it slakes the brazen sun,
Sweet heart, sing on!

Sing on, across the quiet morn,
Thy tuneful psalm;
Before the carking hours are born,
Before the mad wheels grate and turn,
Before the clamor of the mart,
Sing on, dear heart!

Sing on, ere men awake once more
To buy and sell;
Ere greed and gain their dupes allure,
And "grind the faces of the poor,"
All mammon's wiles to thee unknown,
Blest heart, sing on!

Sing on, that through the fevered day
Thy blissful strains
In my soul's deepest depths shall stay
To chase all sordidness away,
And thoughts of purer impulse start;
Sing on, glad heart!

THE OPTIMIST

The songster on the sunny crest
May thrill us with his raptured strain;
The moaning of a wounded breast
May move our pity for its pain;
But ah! we love to hear the best—
A song of gladness in the rain!

TO A SONG SPARROW

Sweet minstrel of the common ways,
A song to thee, a song of praise;
No bird upon the heights that sings
With lofty air and flashing wings,
Hath half the rapture of the strain
That riseth from thy weedy lane,
Hath half the heartening for me
Of thy brief, blythesome melody!

Thou art amongst the first to bring
A cordial welcome to the spring;
E'en ere the buds with promise swell,
Thy voice assures her all is well;
The summer joy thou dost prolong
With matin-hymn and even-song;
And oft thy lively pipe will play
Through autumn's chill and gloom of grey.

O blessèd be thy lightsome breast,
E'en as its fount of cheer hath blest!
Thou canst not boast of raiment fine,
A trim and modest garb is thine,
Yet, dear thy tiny form we hold,
And merit needs no "cloth of gold!"
Take one true lover's song of praise,
Sweet minstrel of the common ways.

IN THE APPLE TREE

Two young robins in a tree
  Made a solemn vow,
Then said Jen to Jacoby,
  "What will we do now?"

"Well," replied her happy spouse,
  "Really, I believe
'Twould be wise to build a house
  Where we could receive."

Jennie blushed, then piped so clear;
  "Just the very thing!
If you will get the twigs, my dear,
  I will find the string.

"And I saw some yellow hair
  Glancing in the sun,
That will make a carpet rare
  When our work is done."

Blissful days in duty spent,
  Oh, how fast they flew!
Spring had spun a leafy tent
  O'er them ere they knew;

Where, secure from every eye,
  They could safely rest,
While sweet thoughts of by and by
  Filled each fluffy breast.

. . . . . .

What a flutter in the air
  Round that tiny home,
Chitter, chatter everywhere,
  COMPANY has come!

HE'S NAE COMIN' HAME

The sun's gane doon ahint the mill,
The mirk ereeps ower the shaw,
The gloamin' air is damp an' chill,
But still the bairn's awa'.

He's nae comin' hame, the rogue,
He's nae comin' hame;
Alang the way we saw him gae,
He's nae comin' hame!

The kettle sings a eantie teen,
The supper waits an' a';
The hoose is eosy, trig an' clean,
But still the bairn's awa'.

He's nae comin' hame, the rogue,
He's nae comin' hame,
The hairts tae eheer that haud him dear,
He's nae comin' hame!

The airms that happit weel their pet
When surly win's would blaw
Are leal an' fain an' eouthie yet,
But still the bairn's awa'.

He's nae comin' hame, the rogue,
He's nae comin' hame,
Though airms should aehe an' hairts should
break,
He's nae comin' hame!

We yet maun dree the warl's eark,
The frosts an' mists that fa'—
Frae ilka scaith, frae dole an' dark,
For aye the bairn's awa'.

He's nae comin' hame, the rogue,
He's nae comin' hame.
Frae joys that nane on earth may ken,
He's nae comin' hame

THE LITTLE AULD MAN

The little auld man's awa'
Wi' his peeh an' his hoast an' a',
  Wi' his bouk sae jimp an' his locks sae scrimp,
An' his voice sae thin an' sma',
  Wi' his dowless step an' his feckless grip
An' his fourscore years an' twa.

The little auld man's awa'
Frae his hame an' his houff an' a';
  Frae the hairts aye leal whether guid or ill
The luif o' the years let fa',
  Frae the mist an' rime o' the gloamin' time,
An' the warstlin' win's that blaw.

The little auld man's awa',
He was wept, he was sung, an' a';
  Though he left nae name in the buik o' Fame,
Nor ocht that was gran' or braw,—
  Yet his name was penned by a han' unkenned
Whar only the Maister saw.

The little auld man's awa,'
To his Lord an' his lo'ed an' a',
  To be seen and see wi' a fautless e'e,
To a bield in his Faither's ha';
  To behauld His face at the trystin'-place,
Wha washed him as white as snaw.

THE LITTLE HOLE UNDER THE STAIR

When I was a laddie in kiltie and hose,
  And my hame was a elachan in Skye,
My het Hielan' bluid gat me hantle o' foes,
  And the tawse o' my daddy forby;
But little I cared for their bumps or their thumps,
  E'en a skelpin' I bauldly would bear,
The only ill thing that could gie me the dumps,
  Was the little hole under the stair!

Fu' eerie I sat in the mirk o' the neuk,
  When the door had been steek'd wi' a birr,
And ponder'd on stories I read in a buik,
  'Till the hair 'neath my bonnet would stir;
And thocht aboot ghosts that my granny had seen,
  Danderin' oot on the links o' Dunblair,—
Until my hairt loupit, as though they had been
  In that little hole under the stair!

And syne I would think o' the bonnie wee boat
  That the bairnies rowed oot on the soun';
Wi' its braw figure-head and its green-painted coat,
  'Twas the pride o' the hail fisher toon.
It drifted awa' through the mist wi' the weans,
  And they never were seen ony mair;
Some kelpie, thocht I, micht hae buried their banes,
  In that little hole under the stair!

In the trauchle o' life I've warstled wi' foes,
And at times in the yird hae gane doon;
This battered auld bouk has been barkit wi' blows
A' the way frae the shins to the eroon;
Yet a' I hae tholed, an' hae maugered sin' syne,
Is but naething ava to compare
Wi' the torments that whiles, when a bairnie, were mine,
In the little hole under the stair!

THE ANE THAT'S AWA'

When Winter sweeps doon in the lap o' the Fa',
And faulds his white wings roun' the earth broon and bare,
When lilt the blythe birdies nae mair in the shaw,
When flowers scatter scent in the dingle nae mair,
Sae dowie am I, for I think o' the time
When hope's cheery lamp-licht gaed oot at a blaw,
When dreichly they bore through the snaw and the rime
Frae love's cosy ingle the ane that's awa'.

The spring and the simmer hae come and hae gane
Sae aft sin' the dawn o' that drearisome day;
The flowers may hae blossomed as fair in the glen,
The birds may hae carolled as cantie a lay;
But dim to the green and the gowd is my e'e,
And dull is my ear to the pipe o' the shaw;
Naught here is as winsome or bonnie to me
Sin' I looked my last on the ane that's awa'.

I ken "It is weel"—that His way maun be best
Wha rules ower the earth and the sea and the air;
I ken, though I'm waesome, my lo'ed ane is blest,
For sorrow and sighin' can never come there;
I ken he is safe wi' the Father abune,
Frae Winter's snell frost and the win's o' the Fa';
Nae mair will I tine the blythe blink o' his e'en,
When hame in Heaven's love licht wi' ane that's awa'.

FEBRUARY

Least loved of all the offspring of the year,
Thou hast small tenure in the realm of song,
No raptured eulogies to thee belong;
The poets pass thee by with face austere,
And curb poor Pegasus with bit severe
And shackled pinions, till thy little reign
Has ceased, and they may soar and sing again,
While March winds sound a requiem o'er thy bier!

And yet, methinks, a singer such as I
May deem thee worthy of a little song;
The bells ring merrier the streets along,
The chimes peal clearer out across the sky,
And children gather in a blither throng
About the hearth at eve when thou art by!

NOVEMBER

What! here again, thou maid of sullen moods
And cloud-bound brow! Across the meads of green
I see the brown track where thy feet have been;
I hear thee raving in the songless woods!

Dear birds! I almost envy them their wings
That bear them hence when skies are all agloom,
When dead leaves whisper of the nearing tomb,
And of the ruin of all earthly things:

Wings that can waft them to the sunny isles,
The ever fragrant and the ever green,
Where winter's icy heel hath never been;
Where Nature's gifts are lavish as her smiles.

And yet, and yet, if I may stronger grow
In the true life beneath a sky austere,
Mid airs inclement and surroundings drear,
Let rigid clime be mine; let north winds blow!

AUTUMN LEAVES

Over the earth they drift to-day,
  Gold and crimson and russet brown,
Flecked and spattered, as though in play
  Nature had thrown her colors down.

Swept and whirled to the miry street,
  See them in loathsome channels lie,
Cleft and trodden by ruthless feet,
  Careless feet of the passers by.

Crushed till beauty and form are lost!
  Crushed with never a thought of pain!
Yea, with this from a light lip tossed,
  "Spring and summer will come again!"

Even here where the willow grieves
  O'er the harvest "the Reaper" keeps,
Wind in billows the rustling leaves,
  Wind and drift where my darling sleeps!

While I press them with tender feet,
  Something whispers amid my pain,
Words I heard in the distant street—
  "Spring and summer will come again!"

TO THE RIVER LOSSIE

Dear Lossie, like a silver thread
  In memory's sanctum hung,
On which my childhood's years, long fled,
  Like golden beads are strung.

I've gazed on rivers deep and broad
  Since our far parting time,
Upon whose ample bosoms rode
  The ships of every clime.

But with an eye of prouder spark,
  And with a sweeter zest,
I've watched the little boats of bark
  Glide out upon your breast.

They say you wind by brae and haugh
  Serenely as of yore,
And loiter 'neath the bending saugh
  As idly as before.

They say you charm young lovers still,
  And, if you would, could tell
Some secrets that cold hearts might thrill,
  From cloistered nooks that fell.

They tell me that you love the sound
  Of children's voices yet;
That when they, gleeful, hover round
  Your tune to them is set.

But when, with reverent flow, you near
The old Cathedral walls,
It loses all its ring of cheer
And to the minor falls.

Dear river, like a silver thread,
That wound my childhood through,
Nought now can quicken memories dead
To fragrant life like you.

DO NOT SAY ME NAY

The throstle pipes his even-song
  Amid the blossoms gay,
And just beyond on blade and frond
  The fountain flings its spray.
All nature feels the mystic touch,
  The quickening breath of May.
What time so meet, here at thy feet,
  My love, my life to lay?
Make thou the joy of spring complete,
  Oh! do not say me nay.

The scent of bloom is on the breeze,
  The sound of vesper bells,
And everywhere in earth and air
  The spring of gladness tells.
And may not I with Nature share
  Life's sweetest things to-day?
One glance of thine and I will join
  Her gladdest roundelay.
Then tell me that thou wilt be mine,
  Oh! do not say me nay.

That little word within my ear
  The throstle's song would still,
And for my sight would cast a blight
  On wood and vale and hill.
'Twould bind the brow of spring with rue
  And veil her face with grey.
'Twould send a chill where warmly thrill
  The pulses of the May.
I wait thy will for good or ill—
  Oh! do not say me nay.

LOVE'S DREAM

I had a dream of thee at early dawn,
  Yet not a dream—as some might understand—
For from my couch the "drowsy god" had flown,
  And lifted from my eyes his fairy wand;
But just a vision that shut out the world,
  And every presence saving thine alone,
Which, like a phantom bark with sails unfurled,
  Bore down upon me from a port unknown.

So near thou wert that I could feel thy breath;
  Not like the flutter of the unseen wing
That comes—they say—upon the cheek of death,
  But like the lifeful breath that later spring
Breathes on the folded petals of the flower,
  Till leaf by leaf it opens, to expand
Its waxen calyx to the genial shower,
  And to the sun-born glory of the land.

And thy near presence at the flush of morn,
  So filled my life, so flooded all my heart
With ecstasy of love, that I seemed borne
  From earth away, and from the flesh apart.
And now I know what means that mystery,
  The life that has no portion with the clay,
For what at morning may be "thee" and "me,"
  Can be beyond the stars ere shuts the day.

GROWING OLD TOGETHER

We are growing old together,
Spring and summer time have fled,
Fled with bud and bloom for ever,
And the autumn tints are shed.
We have wreathed the April blossoms,
We have plucked the flowers of June,
We have seen the last sheaves gathered
Underneath the harvest moon.

We are growing old together;
We are fading side by side;
There are seams we cannot cover,
There are scars that will not hide,
And they bear the silent record,
Yea, of many a care and loss,
And of many a toilsome night-mareh,
And of many a weighty cross.

We are growing old together;
We have counted many a mile,
We have cheered and helped each other
Over many a broken stile.
And when grief's unswerving arrow,
In our aching hearts sank deep,
We have stifled each our sorrow,
That the other might not weep.

We are growing old together,
As we journey down the hill;
Soon our feet must near the river
With its waters deep and chill,
Where the "phantom ship" will anchor
To embark her spirit freight;
Which one of us will sail with her?
Which one will have to wait?

"'TIS SUMMER ALL THE YEAR"

An Autumn Idyll

And now a maid in russet gown
  Trips o'er the wiry grass;
The last lone flowers their heads hang down,
  Grief-bowed to see her pass;
The trellised vines dejected swing
  In tassels brown and sere,
Yet there be joyous hearts that sing—
  "'Tis summer all the year!"

The song birds hear the chilling "hush!"
  And straight their carols close;
And blight falls on the parent bush,
  That rocked the fragrant rose;
The trees their gorgeous tresses fling
  To deck sweet summer's bier,
And yet glad hearts rejoicing sing—
  "'Tis summer all the year!"

The autumn winds may rave and shout,
  Till hoarse their voices be,
The frost may chill the world without,
  And reign o'er wood and lea;
But naught of change can seasons bring
  To Love's immortal sphere,
For in the hearts where Love is king
  "'Tis summer all the year!"

SINCE BABY WENT

When baby eame into our arms of love,
  And elaimed and held them as his lawful throne,
  We felt, we knew, our sovereignty was gone,
And a new monareh—toothless—reigned above.
No humbler homage to their liege have shown
  The vassals of far ages on their knees;
  The heart's ineense and nard we gave, but these
Our king took lightly, holding them his own.

Happy we served him, blissfully eontent,
  The willing servants of his golden wand,
  And then—the seeptre slipped from his wee hand,
The dear eyes elosed, the elinging clasp unbent.
  The thrush's song we cannot understand,
The rose is seentless now—sinee baby went.

MY TRIO

Three little faces smiling bright,
Awaken with the dawn of light:
Three voices fraught with childish glee,
Dispel my morning reverie:
(Too well I know 'tis all in vain
To woo the charmer back again);
In vain I chide, in vain implore,
Each shout comes louder than before.

Three little elves the livelong day,
Around me romp, and skip and play;
My work-bag rifled of its store,
Lies soiled, and trampled on the floor.
Yet, ah! how loathe should be my heart,
With one of these loved forms to part,—
Those eyes to close, those hands to fold
Above a heart grown still and cold.

Three lisping voices nightly rise,
Bearing their simple sacrifice
To the Almighty listening ear,
That loves an infant's prayer to hear.
And thus at eve, while round my knee
They bend, in sweet simplicity,
Methinks I hear the words they say,
Re-echoed from the far away.

Three priceless souls my God hath given,
To wean from earth, to train for heaven;
Three hearts to teach all else above,
The precepts of immortal love.
Lord, teach thou ME, that I may know
The way to lead these lambs below,
That they, when earthly toils are past,
May reach the heavenly fold at last.

A MOTHER'S QUESTIONS

When you are grown to man's estate,
And frost lies on my braids of brown,
If I, my boy, so long may wait
Before I wear the promised crown,
Say, will you smooth the bands of grey
With touch as fond and gentle, love,
As that which soothed my brow to-day,
And from my brain distraction drove?

When you are grown to man's estate,
And dim my eyes, to-day so bright,
If I, my boy, so long may wait
Before heaven's headlands greet my sight,
Say, will you meet my clouded gaze
With glance as tender and as true,
With look as trustful as you raise
E'en now up to the sunny blue?

When you are grown to man's estate,
And threads I hold but feebly run,
If I, my boy, so long may wait
Before life's checkered web be spun,
Say, will the hands I clasp in mine
Grown strong and brave to do and dare,
Build faithful to the plummet-line,
And shape their actions to the square?

When you are grown to man's estate,
And earth drifts from my tott'ring feet,
If I, my boy, so long may wait
Before I tread the upper street,

Say, will the steps I seek to guide
To-day in safe and guileless ways,
In paths of virtue, still abide,
To cheer and bless my latest days?

"Yes, yes!" I knew it would be this;
And yet, my boy, I ask too much;
Though sealed each promise with a kiss,
I dare not take your word for such;
But, lifting to the skies my face,
"Father," I pray, "who art in heaven,
Oh, keep my loved one by Thy grace,
As pure at manhood as at seven!"

THE IMMORTAL

Life's garden holds one everlasting flower
That seeks no dew, no sunlight for its leaves,
That blooms as constant in the leafless bower
As where glad June her summer glory weaves;
Contented just to live, its worth to prove,
Blooms on this deathless flower—a Mother's Love.

THE GIRL WHO HELPS HER MOTHER

They talk to me of maidens fair
  In glowing words and flowery,
They tell me of the graces rare
  Of maidens dark as houri;
But though for maids of beauty's mould
  My love I would not smother,
Far higher in my heart I hold
  The girl who helps her mother!

The girl whose hand is quick to aid
  When sore the burden presses,
And like a benison is laid
  To soothe the home distresses;
Whose gentle voice can calm the strife
  Of sister and of brother;
Whose loudest chiding is her life—
  The girl who helps her mother!

The girl who yields with ready will
  Her own for others' pleasure;
Who is, another's cup to fill,
  Content with stinted measure;
Who guards the wayward feet that roam,
  Nor deems her watching *bother;*
Oh, she's an angel in the home—
  The girl that helps her mother!

God speed them who, with helping hand,
  Are daily pouring blessing
Throughout this great and goodly land;
  May they go on increasing!
Let those who will *the beauty* praise,
  But I will laud the other,
Who on the dear home altar lays
  Her best to help her mother!

WAIT A BIT

There was onee a youth of promise,
In a eountry o'er the sea,
Where the hills are erowned with heather,
And where daisies deek the lea;
He was tall and strong and handsome,
For a chief might have been fit,
But that when he most was needed
He would always *wait a bit.*

With a mind of wondrous vigor
Was this mountain son endowed.
He might well have won a name that
Would have made a nation proud;
He might well have left his fellows
On the lower rounds to sit,
While he elimed fame's towering ladder,
But for that frail *wait a bit.*

He was active on the water,
He was agile on the field,
There was none eould row like Ronald,
Or a better bat eould wield;
He might e'en have been a hero,
With that frame so strongly knit,
If he had not weakly ehosen
For his motto—"Wait a bit."

He put off the hardest lessons
To be learned some other day,
So he saw the plodding student
Bear the laurel wreath away;

And he faltered when the signal
Sounded at the starting-place,
So he saw his weaker rival
Far outstrip him in the race.

It is not the youth or maiden
Who can boast the highest powers
That alone may climb to greatness
In this busy world of ours.
It is not always the fleetest
Who is soonest at the goal;
Nor the arm that is the stoutest
That a legion may control.

But the feet whose trend is upward,
That no barrier can stop,
Though their march be slow and heavy,
May be first to reach the top.
'Tis the dauntless and the ready
That to lead the van are fit—
Who, when duty calls for action,
Never, never, *wait a bit.*

THE WHISTLER

I know a lad of blithesome mood,
  His age is three times three;
I cannot say he's always good,
  Or yet from mischief free;
But let the day be cold or hot,
  The sky be blue or gray,
If foul or fair it matters not,
  He whistles at his play.

His darts the wily tempter flies
  In daylight and in dark;
But when he e'er the whistler tries,
  He's sure to miss his mark:
Of all the lads beneath the sun
  I do believe to-day,
He hates the worst that jolly one
  Who whistles at his play.

Then whistle on, my cheery chap,
  In artless, honest pride,
For who can tell what dread mishap
  Your tune may turn aside?
Each sturdy youth, I wish you joy,
  The grave as well as gay;
But for *my own* give me the boy
  Who whistles at his play.

Some say the world is growing cold,
  No doubt because they're *blue;*
Some think because they're growing old
  The world is ageing too,;
But sure am I 'twill hold its own,
  And warm and young 'twill stay
As long as cheery boys are grown
  To whistle at their play.

IN THE MORNING

Oh, pure and fresh is the early morn,
When all without note of warning
The night has died, and the day is born
In sight of the moon, grown wan and worn,
And the stars to spectres turning.
They miss the best of the summer day,
The best for work and the best for play,
Who lie a-bed in the morning!

The birds awake with a joyous trill
To welcome the new day's dawning;
Blythe Billy goes whistling o'er the hill
To drive the herd to the shady rill.
That boy has no trick of yawning;
A song is echoing through the vale,
For Sue is out with her milking pail
To milk the cows in the morning!

The breath of balm from the greenwood blown
Has healing unknown to learning;
The meads with myriad gems are strewn,
Each blade hath a diamond all its own,
And that without toil of earning.
I ne'er knew any one healthy yet,
I ne'er knew one who was wealthy yet,
Who lay a-bed in the morning!

Then up and away, my girl and boy,
The sleep of the sluggard scorning!
The wind is sighing for kites to fly,
The sun is longing for cheeks to dye,
His tints are the best adorning.
You ne'er will say when the day is done,
Whether your battles be lost or won,
"We rose too soon in the morning!"

CRADLE SONG

Hey-a-day! Ho-a-day! What shall I sing?
Baby is weary of everything—
Weary of "Black Sheep" and "Little Boy Blue,"
Weary of "Little Jack Horner," too,
Weary of "Ding Dong" and "Caper and Crow,"
Weary of "Pretty Maids all in a Row."
Though I have sung to her ditties a score,
Little blue eyes are as wide as before.

Hey-a-day! Ho-a-day! What shall I sing,
Sleep to the eyes of my baby to bring?
Sing her a song of her own little self?
Mystical, whimsical, comical elf!
Sing of the hands that undo with their might
More in a day than my own can set right?
Sing of the feet ever ready to go
Into the places no baby should know?

Hey-a-day! Ho-a-day! Thus will I sing,
While in her cradle my baby I swing:
Sing of the tresses that toss to and fro,
Shading pink cheeks on a pillow of snow;
Sing of the cherry lips guarding for me
Treasures as rare as the pearls of the sea;
Sing of the wonder and marvellous light
Hid in the blue eyes now blinking good-night!

Hey-a-day! Ho-a-day! Joy makes me sing;
Who would have thought that a baby could bring
Into my bosom a love so divine,
Into my heart all this music of mine,
Into my home such a halo of light,
Unto my hands such a magical might,
Unto my feet all the fleetness of wings,
Into my being such wonderful things!

FOUND OUT

The teacher calls them worlds, those shining things
That we think stars, and says they are so high
We could not reach them even if we had wings
And flew and flew as fast as we could fly.

But worlds are made of sand and stones and clay,
I know, for I have seen men dig a pit;
I watched them once for more than half a day,
And that old rubbish didn't shine a bit!

Then grandma thinks that stars come out at nights
To wink at children when it's time for bed,
And when she sees them putting out their lights
She calls, "It's time to waken, sleepy head!"

But I've been studying God's big round sky,
That leaves off over where our world begins,
And found out all about it easily—why,
It's just His cushion full of shiny pins!

TO MY DOLLY

How can you be so quiet there?
With eyes wide open, too,
The pinkest cheeks and smoothest hair,
All in your cradle new;
And never even smile at me,
Or do a single thing,
And I as glad as glad can be—
O sing, my dolly, sing!

The richest baby in the town
Has not a grander bed,
Or pillow made of softer down,
To lie beneath its head;
No kinder mama rocks her pet
With such a gentle swing,
And never once is heard to fret—
Then sing, my dolly, sing!

I guess you're weary lying there,
So I will dress you, Miss,
And curl your pretty flaxen hair;
Now up, and kiss, and kiss!
Your tiny shoes, your skirt of lace,
Your satin hat I'll bring,
Your lovely blue silk sash and dress—
Now sing, my dolly, sing!

Was ever such a lady seen?
And all my very own!
You're really fit to be a queen,
And sit upon a throne!
Oh! dolly, I'm so glad to-night,
Your arms around me fling,
And hug me just the leastest mite,
And sing, my dolly, sing!

SOMEBODY'S BABY

Somebody's baby has fallen asleep
Over there mid the city's din;
Over there where they toil and spin
And sell and barter and lose and win;
Spite of the clamor and strife they keep,
Somebody's baby has fallen asleep.

Somebody's baby has fallen asleep;
Hushed it lies in the darkened room,
Tear-watched all through this long day's gloom,
Flower bedecked for this tiny tomb,
Kissed and kissed where the wee pearls peep,
Somebody's baby has fallen asleep.

Somebody's baby has fallen asleep;
Somebody's precious, peerless pet,
Love-rocked erst, in its robe tear-wet
Here will lie ere the sun has set;
Here poor eyes will weep and weep
For somebody's baby fallen asleep.

Somebody's baby has fallen asleep;
Woe for us if the end were here!
Woe for us if we knew no cheer
Past the mystery, past the bier!
Woe if for aye were the slumber deep
Of somebody's baby fallen asleep.

Somebody's baby has fallen asleep;
Thou, O Christ! who for aye and aye
Rolled the stone from the grave away,
Speak to the grief-swept hearts to-day;
Whisper to them that Thy strong arms keep
Somebody's baby just fallen asleep.

RESTORATION

They are not lost, the things of yesterday,
Though they have passed on wings of thistle down:
We may have smile for smile and frown for frown
When they have bred, like seedlings in the clay,
And borne their kind. They are not lost for aye,
Our secret sacrifice, our veiled relief;
They'll be restored in broader, ampler life,
For hearts grow great that give their best away.

Not lost the faces that we knew so well,
The forms that came and went, and came no more;
Not ours the hand that drew the parting veil;
Not ours the hand that closed and sealed the door;
Yet wait we for the turning of the key,
That will restore what evermore shall be.

THE MISSING FACES

The missing face that fared with us of old,
Whose smile was as familiar as the light
And as the light esteemed, e'en as our right,
Grows not obscurer as the months are told,
But clearer outlined and of finer mould;
Yea, much we marvel that its comeliness
Won not more favor ere it passed from us
To wider vantage, or the streets of gold.

The missing faces that have one by one
Slipped from their dome to star some alien sky
Still light the home-ways; for her galaxy
The mother keeps intact her heart within;
And love endows with all the olden grace,
Unmarred by stress of years, each missing face.

THE ILLS OF YESTERDAY

Yes, let them pass, the ills of yesterday,
The deed unlovely and the speech unjust,
The whispered hint, betrayal of our trust,
That struck Faith's chalice from our lips away,
And trailed her graceful garments in the dust;
Our own default,—the good we might have done,
The battles lost that patience might have won,
The "word in season" that we did not say!
But let them pass, the things that grieved us sore
Behind his back God casts the sins of men,
Repented of, remembering them no more.
And shall not we who have been born again,
And by His wondrous grace to Him brought nigh,
Hold fast the good, and let the evil die?

OLD LETTERS

"Burn them!" yes; I thought they cumbered
The dear nook they filled so long,
So I said, "Their hours are numbered,"
And took up my broken song.

But when to the light I brought them,
Read the words almost effaced,
Pondered on the hearts that thought them,
Pondered on the hands that traced,

Such a tenderness came o'er me,
(Not that pleases, nor that grieves),
As the past rose up before me
From those frayed and faded leaves,

And I dreamed the old dreams over,
(Dreamed them, though my hair is white!)
That were mine when my young lover
In his passioned way would write.

"These must go," I said, "none other
Could their meaning understand,"
(And I would not, friend or brother,
They should fall into your hand);

"So the flames this link shall sever,
And their tongues will never tell;
When I've crossed the mystic river,
They will keep my secret well."

Yet, and yet:—Why do I waver.
And to weaker thoughts give way
While my heart in tones that quaver
Pleads, "Not now—some other day."

"*These*, then surely, ought to perish,
For they fill a goodly space;
There is something I might cherish,
Better worthy of the place."

So I snapped the cord asunder,
That had bound them in a sheaf,
And I saw with little wonder,
Dusky spots on every leaf;

For they were my *oldest* letters,
From my first, my childhood's friend;
Some were even worn in tatters,
Some, I know, with tears were stained.

As I turned the musty pages,
Reading snatches there and here,
These old letters seemed the stages
We had passed from year to year;

Now in joy, and then in sorrow,
Treasures found and snatched away;
Hoping still a glad to-morrow
To succeed the sad to-day.

Tokens, too, of friendships later,
Long I scanned and lingered o'er;
And their import grew the greater,
As I conned them more and more.

Strange, this page with mirth o'erflowing,
Ne'er before seemed half so good!
Strange, these lines with pathos glowing,
Only half were understood!

Strange! I thought me, as I reckoned
All the dear ones passed away,
That their spirits to me beckoned
I should let the letters stay.

Then the children's letters, scribbled
With no thought of care or grace;
Some with ink-drops stained and dabbled,
When from home a little space,

But so full of gush and chatter
Of the sights all strange and new;
Yet so full of earnest matter,
And of love for mother, too.

One I've read and read so often,
I could every word repeat;
Strange, how this old heart will soften,
Poring o'er that blotted sheet!

'Twas the first he wrote to mother,
'Twas the only one he penned,
"Love to sisters from their brother,"
Crossed with kisses at the end.

Ah! my boy, no hand of mortal
Pens me record of thy track;
Thou hast passed within the portal
Whence no message cometh back.

'Tis by faith the veil is lifted,
To reveal thy dwelling-place;
When another scene is shifted
I will see thee face to face.

Burn them! nay; a little longer
In the olden nook they'll stay;
Sometime, when my heart is stronger,
I may put them all away;

But to-day, as o'er I turn them,
Weaker grown I seem to be;
Friends, if I should *never* burn them,
Let this weakness plead for me.

"IF HE HAD LIVED"

"If he had lived!" How oft our yearning hearts,
Far reaching down the labyrinth of Time,
Indulge the wishful thought—"If he had lived!"
How oft our wayward lips in saddened tone,
The words repeat. If but the tender twig,
The sapling lithe, had burgeoned to the tree
What fruit it might have borne! what stateliness
And symmetry of form 'twould have attained!
And how our jaded limbs would have reclined
'Neath the umbrageous shelter of its boughs.
"If he had lived!" we say, "he might have been—"
And so we picture but the sunny side.
But what of all the pitfalls and the snares
That so beset the "slippery path" of youth?
Would he have stood aloof, immaculate,
When to his ear the Tempter's whisper came—
"This shall be thine if thou wilt worship me?"
Would he have weathered every bitter blast,
And swayed not, when the whirlwind and the storm
Raved wildly round this "tenement of clay?"
"If he had lived!" how many a mother's heart,
In all the bitterness of mortal woe
Has thought instead,—"If only he had died!
If, in his baby innocence, my eyes
Had seen the dust strewn on his guileless breast;
And if these hands, in love, had planted flowers
To bud and blossom on his little bed,
How happy I had been: but now, alas!"

Cease then, impatient lips, your wayward speech,
Say not, "If he had lived he might have been"—
But rather this—

How sweet to feel, to think, to know,
When racked our souls with care and strife
That he is safe from every woe
That fills our cup of mortal life;

That nevermore shall pain distress,
Nor fever burn upon his brow
Where last we left our mute caress—
And knew that we must bear and bow.

What joy to know, tho' some may stray,
And wander far in brake and wold,
Our darling is at home alway,
His feet shall never leave the fold.

CALL THEM NOT LOST

Call them not lost, whose souls have crossed the wave
That bare them onward to the eternal shore;
Call them not lost, the good, the true, the brave,
Though to the homes of earth they come no more,
Call them not lost.

Call them not lost, tho' we have closed their eyes,
And laid their bodies in the dreary tomb,
We know that Jesus' voice shall bid them rise,
We know His presence shall disperse the gloom,
Call them not lost.

Lost to the world with all its fleeting joys,
Lost to the world with all its gaudy show,
Lost to the world with all its gilded toys;
But to the weeping ones who wait below,
Call them not lost.

Call them not lost, who for a time were given—
Safe, they, where pain nor death can ever come;
They are not lost. See, at the gate of heaven,
Our loved ones wait to bid us welcome home.
Call them not lost.

WE WILL FORGET

We will forget, when we have stepped across
  The line that bars the old life from the new,
We will forget our longing and our loss,
  And all the desert paths we travelled through.

We will forget the weakness and the pain,
  The days of languishing, the night's unrest,
When from this mortal we have slipped the chain,
  And known at last the freedom of the blest.

We will forget the frailty and the woe,
  The paths wherein we strayed with stumbling feet,
When, perfected and glorified, we grow
  Like unto Him whom we shall see and meet.

Lord, give us patience for each day and night,
  While yet we tarry, prisoned in the clay,
And with the radiance of Thy face make bright
  That shadowy road whose end is perfect day.

WISHING TO DIE IN JUNE

(Lines suggested by reading William Cullen Bryant's "Wish to Die in June.")

It may be beautiful! I grant it so,
And worthy of the poet's glowing pen,
The wish to "fall asleep," while softly blow
The airs of June in every wood and glen;
To sink, unconscious of the parting strand,
Lulled to our rest by hum of drowsy bee;
To lose our latest sense while gently fanned
By breezes wafted through the lilac tree;
And then, in nature's flowery lap at last
To lay us down, while swallows flit o'erhead,
And mock the prating sexton's "dust to dust";
And the green Earth cries out, "there are no dead!"

But little reck I whether breath of June,
Shall scatter fragrant blossoms on my bier;
Or whether autumn winds with dreary croon,
Shall chant my dirge amid the willows sere;
Or whether winter with a tearless eye,
Shall coldly gaze into my frozen bed;
If in the Christian's faith and hope I die,
To deathless life, resurgam from the dead.

Yet one dear wish oft lingers in my heart,
If it be sin, then let the thought depart:
I would not tarry waiting for the word
To call me hence, with rust upon my sword;
But rather go as warrior from the field,
Who falls with helmet cleft upon his shield;
Whose latest grasp is on his "trusty steel";
Whose latest blow is for his country's weal;
Who hears the great, the High Commander's "Come!'
Ere yet has ceased the rolling of the drum.

AN EVERY DAY HOMILY

If we are in doubt about it,
  If it is not clear to view
That the thing we think of doing
  Is the thing that we should do;
Be it what our hand intendeth,
  Be it what our lips would say,
With a brave and honest effort
  Let us put the thing away!

If we heed the urgent pleading
  Of that inward undertone,
We may find its voice the sweetest,
  Yea, the dearest we have known;
But if all our plans pursuing,
  E'en as though that voice were dumb,
Some wrong word or deed may follow
  That will mar the years to come.

Strength is ever born of action,
  Strength of arm, and strength of will,
Strength to forge the links that fetter,
  Strength to break the bonds of ill!
Strong temptations oft resisted
  By-and-bye will lose their power;
Yielding, we our peace may barter
  For the pleasure of an hour.

If we are in doubt about it,
  If it is not clear to view
That the thing we think of doing
  Is the thing that we should do;
Seeking not our friends' approval,
  Fearing not what some may say,
Let us without hesitation
  Put the doubtful thing away.

HURRY UP!

We're all in such a hurry,
  We hustle and we fuss
As if the very furies
  Or fiends were after us,
We tumble o'er each other
  At skittles first to be;
We trample one another
  The monkey show to see!

It's hurry, hurry, hurry up,
  With everything we do,
We hurry to get at it,
  And we hurry to get thru!

Dame Nature tries to teach us
  As plainly as she may—
Whoe'er her mark o'erreaches
  The penalty must pay;
But lost is all her caution,
  Her hints are thrown away,
We have no time to listen
  To what she has to say.

We're all in such a hurry,
  And yet we know not why!
Perchance some secret motor
  Just keeps us on the fly!
Or we have caught a fever
  Of tearing, typhoon cast,
From fiery, flying microbes
  Of comets whizzing past!

We're all in sueh a hurry,
To ehase along the day,
We have no time to ponder,
And hardly time to pray;
But one may overtake us,
However hot our race,
Whose "Halt!" will surely eheek us,
And end our reckless paee!

It's hurry, hurry, hurry up,
With everything we do,
We hurry to get at it,
And we hurry to get thru!

PUT YOUR CONSCIENCE IN IT

Would you feel at close of day
  Blythesome as a linnet?
While the moments speed away,
At your work or at your play,
Whatsoe'er you do or say,
  Put your conscience in it.

Is your task a tiresome one?
  With a will begin it!
Well begun is half-way done;
Yours may be, ere set of sun,
Honor, by the effort won,
  With your conscience in it.

Is it for renown you look?
  Up, my lad, and win it!
Fame comes not "by hook or crook,"
Save in silly story book;
He whose work the laurels took
  Put his conscience in it.

Who the heart of youth would chill,
  Or the warmth within it?
Leisure hours with gladness fill,
Be as merry as you will,
Have a jolly time—but still,
  Put your conscience in it.

LOOKING UP

There is a good God overhead,
  Wherever we may be,
Whose mighty arms of Fatherhood
  Encompass land and sea,
Whose children cannot lose His grasp,
  Nor past His mercy flee.

Above the tumult and the tears
  He rules who rules aright,
He guides the spheres along the years
  And keeps their lamps alight;
And we, e'en more than moon and stars,
  Are precious in His sight.

O blest is he in calm or storm
  Whose helmsman is his God;
Who looks above the powerless arm
  Along the trackless road;
Who chooses, unafraid of harm,
  The path his Master trod.

There is a good God overhead,
  May this the hearts inspire,
That rise above their passions dead
  To holier desire;
And lay their past ills done and said
  In one great funeral pyre!

THE MAPLE SO GREEN

You may sing while the pride of your heart overflows
Of the land of the thistle, the land of the rose;
You may tune the mute harp of fair Erin once more,
And awaken a strain to the glory of yore.
You may sing of your mountains, your crags and your dells,
Of your roses, and shamrocks and sweet heather bells;
Of your hoary old castles, and knights they have seen,—
I will sing of the land of the Maple so green.

You may boast of your triumphs by land and by sea,
Of a home that the blood of your sires has made free;
You may tell of the glory immortal that clings
Round the graves of your heroes, the tombs of your kings;
But for me, I will sing of my dear forest home,
Of her rivers' proud sweep, and her cataracts' foam,
Of her wilds where the red deer can gambol unseen,
'Neath the wide-spreading boughs of the Maple so green.

O, give me the land of the lake and the wood,
Where the rod and the bow I can wield unpursued;
A cot 'neath the shade of the green maple tree
Is dearer than mansion or palace to me;
No fawning to *gentles* and *nobles* is here,
No lordling to dread, and no tyrant to fear;
For the tiller is *lord* where his ploughshare has been,
In the free forest land of the Maple so green.

A NATION'S PRAYER

God of the weak and of the strong,
  Thy people's help on land and sea,
The incense of a nation's song,
  We lift to Thee.

So long Thy blessings we have known,
  So many giv'n, so few denied,
That we have held them as our own—
  Forgive our pride.

Oh, make our homes Thy blest abode,
  Where folded are the hearts we love,
Till each shall own Thy Fatherhood
  All else above.

A godly nation may we be,
  The people of this bounteous land,
Cemented by our faith in Thee,
  As one we stand.

Our lands that stretch from sea to sea,
  With all their wealth of vale and hill,
So long Thou hast from foes kept free—
  God keep them still.

And may the hallowed wings of Peace
  Extend and brood from shore to shore,
And all the woes of warfare cease
  Forevermore.

THE FATHERS OF OUR LAND

Dear Lord and Father of us all,
We lift our grateful hearts to Thee,
That Thou dost hear Thy children's eall,
Where'er they are, where'er they be;
And so we pray, in heart and hand,
God bless the fathers of our land!

The fathers who go forth at morn
In manhood's name and manhood's might,
By the dear love of home upborne,
And strengthened for the daily fight,
Thru toil and tumult eheered and led,
By duty and their children's bread.

A blessing on the fathers be,
Who, in the stress of wind and tide,
Still guide the helm on land and sea,
That those they love may safely ride,
Who in the lure of power or gain
Still strive to "quit themselves like men."

The praying fathers of our land,
With needed grace and wisdom bless,
To lead the children by the hand
In ways of truth and righteousness,
That there may brood o'er eaeh abode
The holy Fatherhood of God.

THE KING OF HIS OWN LITTLE CASTLE

All day for my masters I come and I go,
  Their line is the mark I keep toeing;
I nothing must be, and I nothing must know,
  But just shift my sails to their blowing;
Yet here in the gloaming contented I rest,
  For here I am nobody's vassal;
I've built me a throne in the hearts I love best,
  And I'm king of my own little castle!

What though for a time to the yoke I must bend,
  And e'en feel the smart of its galling,
The moments fly fast the stout heart to befriend,
  And I'm free when the shadows are falling.
Then here I can flee like a bird to its nest,
  Like a bird that is nobody's vassal,
And sing, while I hug the sweet thought to my breast,
  I am king of my own little castle!

What though I'm unlettered and lowly of birth,
  And in wisdom may be but a gannet,
I yet am a sage to the host on my hearth,
  And a peer in the eyes of my Janet!
So happy am I when the sun's in the west,
  For then I am nobody's vassal;
My throne is secure in the hearts I love best,
  And I'm king of my own little castle!

I envy no state of the proud or the great,
  The vineyard of none do I covet,
I crave no delight found beyond my own gate,
  My home is my realm, and I love it!
Away with the pleasures abroad in the night!
  Away, with your wine and your wassail!
I drink at love's spring by the cheery firelight,
  And I'm king in my own little castle!

KEEP A LIGHT IN THE WINDOW

Keep a light in the window burning,
Faint though its glimmering be,
It may lighten some homeless wanderer,
Tossed upon life's dark sea:
It may whisper thoughts of comfort,
And hope to the sinking heart,
Of the beacon that fadeless gleameth,
When the sunbeams of earth depart.

Keep a light in the window burning,
Brilliantly, for a sign,
That upon you the "God of Israel"
Maketh His face to shine:
Hoping that some lost brother
Waylaid in the path of sin,
May espy its welcome glimmer,
And joyfully enter in.

Keep a light in the window burning,
Ye who in the Lord rejoice,
And with hopeful souls are waiting
For the sound of the Bridegroom's voice:
Till the light of His glorious presence
Extinguish the feeble ray;
Like the morning star it shall vanish
In the light of the "perfect day."

VIA OBSCURA

Succor, O God! This hedged and tortuous pass
Narrows and darkens to my 'wildered feet;
The brambles stretch their thorny arms and meet
To bar my steps amid the tangled grass.
No human ear my soul-pent cry can heed,
Nor human ministry can reach my need!

Succor, O God! The footprints of my Lord
That led me on, that were my guide erstwhile,
These eyes have missed for many a dreary mile,
So little lustre did my lamp afford,
So blind was I with mist of tears unshed,
Born of my fear this devious way to tread!

Succor, O God! I ask not for the light
Of the sun's burnished face to gild my noon,
Nor for my night the silver of the moon:
I crave no painted skies to cheer my sight;
But while beyond this veil I cannot see,
O for Thy smile divine to succor me!

Succor, O God! I seek not pleasant ways
By singing brooks, or over flower-gemmed sod
(Remembering One, and where He ofttimes trod),
But largess of such faith that I may trace
The Master's steps, and follow where they be,
Through desert place as by fair Galilee!

Succor, O God! Count not my coward fears;
Weigh not my weakness and unfaithfulness;
Lay not Thy plummet-line without Thy grace
Against the fabric builded of my years;
But for the sinless Christ's sake, with Thy rod
Thy staff, a wayworn child succor, O God!

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

The Lord is my Shepherd, no want shall be mine,
He maketh me lie amid pastures of green;
When parched by the heat of the noonday, I pine,
He leadeth me down by the waters serene.

My soul He restoreth with strength from on high,
When, compassed by foes, I would faint in the fight,
And for His name's sake when temptation is nigh,
He guideth my feet in the pathway of right.

Yea, though I should walk through death's shadowy vale,
E'en there shall no evil my spirit dismay.
For Thou wilt be with me whate'er may assail,
Thy rod and Thy staff be my comfort and stay.

My bountiful table before me is spread,
Prepared by Thy hand in the sight of my foes;
With oil Thou hast even anointed my head;
With favor and blessing my cup overflows.

Thy goodness and mercy shall follow me on,
And surely abide till life's journey be o'er;
Then, all the brief days of my pilgrimage done,
I'll dwell in the house of the Lord evermore.

"ON THE HOME STRETCH"

"On the home streteh!" Thoughts of the nearing view
The flagging powers revive. The torpid heart
Leaps to its offiee, and its pulses start
A lusty drum-beat at the impulse new;
The dull eyes elear, and pierce the dust-clouds through;
The burden lightens, and the stinging smart
Of the galled shoulders feels the healer's art;
The feet take on the buoyancy they knew
Before they trod the desert's blistering sand;
The memory freshens, faded faces rise,
Their graee renewed, the old light in their eyes;
And One, whose shadow in the weary land
The pilgrim sought, appears in human guise
To guide him homeward with His piereèd hand!

CANTATE DOMINO

Who should sing if not the Christian?
What more gladsome soul can be
Than the one from death eternal
And the power of sin set free?
Great Redeemer,
All our joys we owe to Thee!

Who should sing if not the Christian?
Heir of glory with his Lord;
God-directed, God-encompassed,
By the promise of His Word?
"Abba, Father,"
Be Thy name for aye adored!

Who should sing if not the Christian?
Raised from vale to mountain height,
Land of bondage left behind him,
Land of promise just in sight,
And the City
Where the Lamb Himself is light.

Who should sing if not the Christian?
Hath the world sublimer strains
Than the anthems of the spirit
Where the love of Jesus reigns?
Blessed spirit
Where the love of Jesus reigns!

Sing, ye saints, your songs triumphant!
Sing with voice and heart and soul!
Let the peans of the ransomed
Down through all the ages roll
Till the heavens
Are "departed as a scroll!"

FATHER, GLORIFY THY NAME

King of nations, Great Jehovah,
Lord, Omnipotent, All-wise,
From my heart each idol sever,
When to Thee I lift mine eyes;
Banish every selfish pleasure,
Every wish for wealth or fame.
Satisfy me with Thy measure,
"Father, glorify *Thy* name."

Though I journey through a desert,
Parched, and panting for the goal;
Though the rocks that stretch before me
Hide the Canaan of my soul;
Through the plain as through a garden,
Teach my feet to tread the same;
Be Thy will my life's endeavor,
"Father, glorify *Thy* name."

Though each earthly shrine be broken;
Though each earthly ill assail;
Though I lose all earth's possession;
Though "the cruse of oil" should fail;
Still, oh! still, whate'er befall me,
Need I count it loss or shame?
Having THEE, I still have all things,
"Father, glorify *Thy* name."

AN EVENING ORISON

My prayer I lift to-night
Up to Thy throne of light,
Thou "King of kings"!
Bid inward tumults cease,
My feeble faith increase,
Until the "perfect peace"
At length it brings.

I ask not to be free
From burdens framed for me
Along life's way;
But while I walk or stand,
Or run at Thy command,
Grant me Thy strong right hand,
Dear Lord, I pray!

I ask not to be fed
Upon the finest bread,
And rarest wine;
Give me sustaining grace,
The sunshine of Thy face,
And joy shall fill my days,
Though husks be mine.

I am as nought to Thee
Whose might and majesty
Archangels sing!
Yet Thou—though Lord of all—
Wilt deign to heed my call,
For on Thy word I fall,
My God and King!

Oh, bend Thine ear to-night
From Thy great throne of light
Even to me!
My heart Thy temple make;
Each hind'ring idol break;
For my Redeemer's sake—
So let it be!

THE UNCHANGEABLE

Dear Christ, through all the folded years
  Thy goodness on my life hath lain,
Thou hast brought courage from my fears,
And even from my bitter tears
  Distilled a sweet refrain.

Dear Christ, on whom I lean to-day,
  The while life's burdens sorely press;
"The keepers of my house" decay
And fail, but Thou art still my stay
  And my safe hiding-place.

Dear Christ, when, soon or late, 'tis mine
  To tread the vale that Thou has trod,
Uphold me with Thine arm divine,
And let me lay my hand in Thine,
  And feel Thy staff and rod.

O Friend of ages yet to be,
  I lift to Thee my longing eyes;
"The measure of my days" I see,
The end of all I love but Thee—
  The Friend that never dies!

REINFORCED

He came to me that subtle one of old,
With mask of blandness on his visage bold,
And held the glass he carried to my eyes,
That I might see how petty was the size
Of what I, verily, a mountain thought
Between my fealty and the thing I sought.

"'Tis but a mole-hill!" I had almost cried,
When, lo! a well-known stalwart form I spied
Diminished to a pigmy! Then I knew
Who sought to cheat me with distorted view;
Whose lying tool dwarfed to a paltry thing
The guilt of a soul's treason to its King!

Ashamed to think how nearly had my word,
In haste called small what yet could grieve my Lord,
I hid my face so that I might not see
Him turn away in loathing just from me;
Yet prayed my lips the while, "Abide, abide!"
And, ere I wist, my Lord was at my side!

CONSOLATION

Methinks that they are truly blest
  Who cling to God through good and ill,
Who, though He grants not their request,
  Believe Him and adore Him still.
For what is man, that he should know
  The issue of the thing he craves?
Perchance his soul from bitter woe
  God's love, by His withholding, saves.

Take comfort, heart, that keeps to-day
  Some life-long wish denied thee still,
Nor men nor angels could gainsay
  Fulfillment, if it were God's will:
He would not miss from His estate
  The substance of thy little quest,
Nor grudge it, were it e'er so great—
  Dear heart, if it could make thee blest!

FULFILLED

A child in a heedless way
To earth let fall
A seed that was hard and gray
And dry and small;
No palette of limner knew
The fostering mold,
Yet out of its heart there grew
The green and gold.

The breeze bore a song away
From gladful tongue;
It was but a simple lay
And crudely sung;
Yet, hearing, a chastened one
Forgot his pain,
And hope, in a life undone,
Revived again.

A soul that had learned of him,
The Truth, the Way,
Weak-voiced, where his comrades came,
Essayed to pray!
And there was the sinner bowed,
Long used to scorn,
And there to his Father, God,
A son was born!

The seed from an infant's hand
At random thrown,
The song that the passing wind
Afar had blown,
The light of a soul made free
Shed o'er sin's road,
Wrought out mysteriously
The will of God!

THE BENISON

"God gave the increase."—Cor. iii. 6.

I penned a tender thought of God,
And framed it in a prayer,
And laid it by the dusty road
Where men their burdens bear,
Thinking, perchance, some wayworn one,
By galling yoke oppressed,
Might look on what my hand had done,
And seek the promised *rest*.

Years came and went, while pilgrim feet
Grew weary by the way,
And broken hearts refused to beat,
And lips forgot to pray.
My words were dimmed by Summer's rays
And Winter's blasts of cold,
But bright as in its primal days
Still shone their frame of gold.

"How vain," said I, "in such a place
My fair device has been:
I might have hung it where its grace
The noble would have seen!"
But even while I spake there came
A pilgrim bowed and hoar,
Drawn hither by the lustrous frame
To read the words it bore:

And when he went, I marked he trod
With step of lighter grace,
And high above the dusty road
He lifted up his face.
O vain and faithless heart of mine!
O feeble hands of clay!
Without the benison divine
Your works must pass away!

But e'en the humblest word or deed,
Fanned by the breath of God,
Can spring and bear immortal seed
In the most barren sod!
My lines had perished by the way,
No blessed fruit to bear,
But for the breath that on them lay,
But for their frame of prayer!

"PITY US ALL"

Pity the young, O God! the heedless young,
Supple of limb, and clear of brow and eye,
Ready and strong and swift of hand and tongue,
Hopeful and blythe though sullen be the sky,
Yet in whose hearts there is no thought of Thee.
At their fresh, gushing fount they drink and drink
Till they are drunk with life's new bubbling wine,
And so disport that they can see no brink
Past their Elysian world's horizon line.
In Thy great tenderness their keeper be;
Pity the young, O God!

Pity the old, O God! the godless old,
Who long from Thy good earth have had their fill,
And basked in Thy great sun when they were cold,
But who are strangers to the Giver still;
Who know Thee, God, and yet who know not Thee,
Callous who are and blurred in thought and sight,
Whose palsied hands no more perform their will,
Who hate the shadows of their starless night,
Where grim fears flit, the ghosts they cannot kill.
In mercy wide as Thine infinity,
Pity the old, O God!

Pity us all, O God! the young, the old,
And those at full tide of their strength and grace,
Who daily dance around their calves of gold,
Yet have no time, no time to seek Thy face!
Pity the fainting souls who cry to Thee,
Who crave the Almighty arm for Christ's dear sake;
"O to be more like Him!" who yearning say,
And from the holy thought new courage take,
Yet drop to slumber while they watch and pray.
Thou Lover of distraught humanity,
Pity us all, O God!

SHOW ME THY FACE

Show me Thy face, O Thou benignest Friend—
Show me Thy face!
Across my way the clouds low, darkling bend—
Show me Thy face!
The mist with gloaming all the valley fills,
I cannot see the "everlasting hills!"

Show me Thy face—though I have slighted Thee,
Turn not away;
But in Thy tender mercy let me see
Thy face to-day!
I have no merit for each boon to plead,
I have no plea to offer but *my need.*

Show me Thy face that I may walk aright,
Lord, before Thee;—
That I, though feebly, may reflect its light
Where men may see;
That I may have no fear by night or day,
No dread to pass adown the silent way!

Show me Thy face with nothing drawn between,
On earth or sky,
That wholly bathed in its life-quickening sheen
My soul may lie!
Lo! e'en the while I speak, the light grows clear,
The clouds roll back, the mountain tops appear!

TEACH US TO WAIT

Teach us to wait, thou Teacher all divine;
When we would haste, teach us to be supine;
When we would seek some field beyond our gate
And Thy blest will, O teach us, Lord, to wait!

'Tis sweet to work, to watch with eager eyes
Our stone on stone unto fair structure rise,
To see the crossing of the flaxen strands
Grow to a goodly web beneath our hands;

But, O, to count the idle hours go by,
To sit, and sit, when we so fain would fly,
To keep the restless, wayward spirit still,
To fold our hands and wait our Father's will,

Needs strength and courage more than to make war
On mortal foes when we out-numbered are,
Teach us to wait, then, Lord, nor think it shame,
If we by waiting magnify Thy name.

FORESHADOWING

If this should be my latest day,
  My last upon this earth,
And tender hands should put away
  The arm-chair from the hearth,
And gather with a saddened touch
  These links of woman's lore,
Life's busy hours' companions such
  As I should need no more:

Dear Christ, who walked with lowly men
  In lone and desert ways,
Who tasted past all human ken,
  The dole of bitter days,
Who trod Thyself the anguished road
  That leadeth to the tomb,
Show me, fair, sinless Son of God!
  Thy face across the gloom!

O Thou, who didst my erring feet
  From paths of peril win,
Who with Thy righteousness complete
  Hast covered all my sin,
If this day should the shoals reveal
  Where my frail bark shall strand,
Strength of my soul's strength, let me feel
  The clasping of Thy hand!

"AT PEACE WITH GOD"

At peace with God: the conflict past,
The reign of self and Satan o'er;
The stubborn neck is bowed at last,
Its King to worship and adore;
The rebel will, defiant long,
That owned no sway its own above,
Is stormed within its fortress strong,
And conquered by the God of love.

At peace with God: these hands of mine
Are washed from every guilty stain,
No more to wound their Lord divine,
Or pour contumely on His pain:
My feet on ruin's brink that stood,
And in the path of scorners trod,
No longer spurn the precious blood,
And trample thus the Son of God.

At peace with God: my hands, my feet,
My heart, my will, submissive now!
Lord, lead me as Thou seest meet,
Mine only at Thy feet to bow:
Mine but to follow day by day,
Or rough or smooth shall be the road;
Thy way will be my cheerful way,
Shod with the "perfect peace" of God.

At peace with God: O blessed peace!
With calm delight that fills my soul,
Whose holy rapture will increase
And strengthen, as the years shall roll:
E'en as the stream that seeks the tide
With every mile will broader be,
So shall my peace grow deep and wide
Through time and in eternity.

THE HALCYON SEA

There is a sea, so deep, so calm,
  Past stress of wind and swell of tide,
Whose only murmur is a psalm,
  And where the frailest bark may ride.

Upon its shores are left behind
  All things that cumber and corrode;
E'er "stayed on Him," the soul may find
  That sea, the "Perfect Peace" of God.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE

What is the Christian's hope? The question rose,
And stayed, and pressed, and would not be put by,
For long I had been pondering on those
Who hopeless live, and as they live, so die.
What is the Christian's hope—the hope that cheers
When human arts and human solace fail,
That wings the passing spirit, calms its fears,
And lights its passage through the darksome vale?

Is it the promised and the blessed rest
That for God's weary ones doth yet remain,
So precious to the eyes by sleep unblest,
So precious to the pilgrim of the plain,
So precious to the toiler in the field,
Depressed by thoughts of services remiss,
As he has marked in every season's yield
Tares mingled with his wheat? Ah, more than this!

Is it surcease of sickness and of pain,
Of longing for the night when it is day,
Of longing for the light of dawn again,
As night's slow-footed watches drag a way?
Is it an end of weeping and of woe
O'er riven ties and broken promises—
For God Himself shall wipe away, we know,
All tears for evermore? Yea, more than this!

Is it a mansion in the City fair
By saintly hand unfolded to our sight,
Where falls no night, where comes no death, and
where
No curse can enter with its breath of blight:

Where brighter than the sun His face doth shine,
The Lamb of God, the Sun of Righteousness,
Whose glory filleth all the place divine,
The only light thereof? E'en more than this!

Is it to meet around the throne of God
The loved of old that faded from our sight,
Our sainted ones, who in the priceless blood
Of Christ have washed their robes and made them white:
To see the faces we have missed so long
Lit with the radiance of celestial bliss,
And join lost voices in the glad "new song,"—
Can heart of mortal hope for more than this?

Yea, more: for searching in the Book at even,
Assurance seeking, on these words I came:
"Father, I will that they whom Thou hast given
To Me, be also with Me where I am."
And further on, by unseen beacon led,
The while new light broke on my vision dim,
My questioning seemed answered as I read—
"When He appeareth, we shall be like Him!"

The Christian's hope—communion with his Lord,
No shrouding veil between, but "face to face";
In very truth to listen to His word
And dwell with Him in His abiding-place:
To be *like Him*—God's well-belovèd Son,
Past taint, or touch, or lightest breath of sin;
O blessed hope! Tired toiler, downcast one,
Open your heart and let its joy come in!

THAT SONG

I love that song; although I eannot hear
It even yet without a thrill of pain:
It stirs my heart as Indian Summer's breath
Might stir the russet leaves upon the sward,
Or fan the petals of some faded flower,
Awakening, though but to be hushed again.
Dear folded thoughts and garnered memories
Of days when nestlings ehirped, and parent birds
Twittered their loves upon the greenest boughs:
Of days when rose's eheek, like maiden's—coy,
Flushed 'neath the kisses of the amorous bee.
It almost seems to bring my dead to life,
For I ean shut my eyes upon the world,
And, listening, think that it is *he* who sings.

As darkness only deeper, denser seems
After the lightning's flash, e'en so my grief,
When the last murmur of that song has died:
And oft I wonder, when my soul is bowed
In tranquil sadness, if, in Paradise,
Our earthly music shall be all forgot;
If the dear voices that shall speak our names
Will ever vibrate with the olden tones,
Or shall the melody of earth be merged,
As flower in fruit, into the perfect strain,
The pure, the glad, the glorious "New Song!"

"WORSHIP THE LORD"

Worship the Lord in the flush of the morning,
  Fresh from our slumbers His name let us praise;
While the first day-beams the meads are adorning,
  Glorify Him who hath kindled the rays.
Through the dim glades of the night-land proteeted
  Watehed by a pow'r and a presenee benign,
Straight from the symbol of death resurreeted,
  Lift we our hearts to the Keeper divine.
Worship the Lord in the spirit of lowliness!
"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!"

Worship the Lord in the glow of the noontide,
  Lift up our eyes from the works of our hands;
All our deviees time's billows will soon hide—
  E'en as a tale that is traeed in the sands.
Not for the glory of self are we living,
  Nor for the good of the ereature alone;
Honor and praise and our highest thanksgiving,
  He who hath made us requires from His own.
Worship the Lord in the spirit of lowliness!
"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!"

Worship the Lord in the grey of the gloaming,
  When the day's elamor and eark have sureease,
When the slack wings to their windows are homing,
  When the heart pants for the wellsprings of peaee.
Worship the Lord, there is rest in devotion,
  Languor will flęe at the breath of a psalm;
For the soul sin-sick His word hath a potion;
  Prayer soothes the turbulent spirit like balm.
Worship the Lord in the spirit of lowliness!
"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!"

I NEED THEE, LORD

I need Thee, Lord, I am so blind
That oft my way I scarce can find;
For, trusting in my feeble sight,
I miss Thy hand; Lord be my light!

I need Thee, Lord, I am so weak
To do Thy will, when Thou dost speak;
For I forget the breadth and length
Of Thy dear arms; Lord be my strength!

I need Thee, Lord, I am so vain,
More eager oft men's praise to gain
Than have my actions and my way
Approved of Thee; Lord, be my stay!

I need Thee, Lord; I am so poor,
And earthly bonds are insecure,
My empty hands freed from their thrall
I stretch to Thee; Lord, be my all!

I need Thee, Lord, for I am nought
Save what Thy grace in me hath wrought;
Unworthy, on that grace I fall
For light and strength and stay and all!

GOD'S HIDDEN ONES

(Psalm 83: 3.)

His "hidden ones!" 'Neath the umbrageous wing
Of the eternal God, what shall they fear,
To-day, to-morrow, thitherward or here?
Can day discover or can darkness bring
Terror to such? Can any evil thing,
By storm or stealth, or stratagem come near
To mar what God hides, or presume to peer,
Within what bears the signet of the King?

"Thy hidden ones!" O Father, can it be
That 'mid the chosen of Thy heart divine,
So kept and sheltered in a love like Thine,
Thou e'en dost grant a little space for me,
A child unworthy of Thy heed benign,
Unworthy to be hidden thus of Thee?

IF HE WILL IT SO

The meadows and the brooks are calling "Come!"
In wordless ways, by green blades beckoning,
And flower-lips, parted by the wild bee's wing,
And plashing wavelets long so still and dumb,
That lure the children's white feet to their foam,
While breezes redolent of wood and hill,
Or strong-breath'd sea, ambrosial odors spill
To woo us from the cloistered bowers of home.

O, blessèd he, who, hearing, can obey,
And stop his irksome shuttle for a while;
But blessed even more, methinks, are they
Who, hearing, yet are happy as they toil,
Content, cognizant of God's call, to go,
Content to tarry, should He will it so!

L'ENVOI

Perchance, if some glad, tender thought
That my rapt Muse in song has wrought
May serve to cheer or soothe or bless
Some kindred heart that woes oppress;

Or if some prayerful lay of mine,
Winged by the Spirit-power divine,
May stay some foot on ruin's road,
Or lead some wand'rer nearer God;

It is enough, enough for me,
I seek no mightier minstrelsy.
Though Fame be deaf to their refrain,
My songs have not been sung in vain.

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Maitland, Mary A. Davidson, 1839-
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